

People of Importance – The Second Hundred Years

Colonel D'Alton Mann, 1839-1920

In Hague, Colonel Mann is most remembered for his connection with Harry Watrous and the Lake George Monster hoax. The Colonel, a NYC millionaire, lived on one of Hague's most popular camping islands, Waltonian, where he built his summer residence, Saunterer's Rest. But Waltonian Island was state owned land. Caroline Clifton Turner, whose family owned the original Island Harbor House Hotel, wrote in a 2006 email: "The state finally mandated that the cottage be removed. Mann had it cut into sections and moved it across the ice in the winter of 1917-18. After his death in 1920, his daughter sold the cottage to the Clifton family."

Before his fame at Hague on Waltonian Island, Colonel William d'Alton Mann, at age 23, distinguished himself by becoming the youngest colonel in the Civil War. At Mann's suggestion, the Secretary of War approved the use of mounted riflemen and put Mann in charge of them. Mann organized the 5th and 7th Michigan Cavalry companies. He led the 7th Michigan under the command of General George Custer. Mann commanded this company at Gettysburg. The victory became the turning point of the War. (see *Stories of Hague* vol.4 "Colonel Mann." by Ursula Montbriand, Hague Historical Society, May 1978.)

Colonel Mann and Harry Watrous were fishing rivals. At the right, see the location of Col. Mann's house compared to the former location of his house on Waltonian Island. Watrous lived in his mansion on the mainland just a stone's throw south of Island Harbor and in line with the southern point of the larger Waltonian Island from which Mann had to move in later years. But in 1906, while he still lived on the island, Col. Mann created a wooden fish the size of three ten-pound potato sacks to impress Harry Watrous that he could land the biggest fish. Not to be outdone, Harry built a "Lake George Monster" out of a wooden log and gave it protruding glass-insulator eyes, flaring nostrils and straggling whiskers. Watrous rigged his creation on a rope pulley from his garage so it was hidden underwater. He would pull it up out of the lake to frighten the Colonel and his friends when they chanced to be rowing by moonlight on a summer's evening, or passed by at dusk on the Colonel's elegant naphtha-launch.

The story has been told for over a century of how the frightened passengers panicked and fled. Supposedly the monster stories frightened away enough tourists in the following summers to hurt business. Years later, Harry Watrous owned-up to

the hoax and revealed his secret serpent. Its replica is now displayed in a glass case in the lobby of the Hague Town Hall and Community Center.

Not so well known or as often told are some other things about Col. Mann. From Saunterer's Rest, the home he had built on Waltonian Island (just across from Harry Watrous's residence on the mainland and nearby Island Harbor House), the rich and famous Colonel offered prizes and was a judge at many of Hague's regattas. He competed in them, too. He entertained all the best people at his lavish dinners and dance parties. During all those activities he was gathering grist for the mill to use in his weekly magazine, *Town Topics*. He wrote his column based on tidbits from eavesdroppers like servants or "hired spies" who might also be the musicians playing a ballroom waltz. People would pay huge amounts of money to keep scandalous inferences out of print. Colonel Mann was so clever that *Town Topics* was never successfully sued for libel. He didn't name names, but his victims were easily recognizable by readers in the same social circles. This was the case in the instance of Miss Alice Roosevelt. Mark Caldwell reported this so well in Chapter I of his book, *A Short History of Rudeness*. Below is an excerpt from Mann's column aimed at Alice Roosevelt which appeared in 1904 in *Town Topics*:

From wearing costly lingerie to indulging in fancy dances for the edification of men was only a step. And then came—second step—indulging freely in stimulants. Flying all around Newport without a chaperon was another thing that greatly concerned Mother Grundy. There may have been no reason for the old lady making such a fuss about it, but if the young woman knew some of the tales that are told at the clubs at Newport she would be more careful in the future about what she does and how she does it. They are given to saying almost anything at the Reading Room, but I was really surprised to hear her name mentioned openly there in connection with that of a certain multi-millionaire of the colony and with certain doings that gentle people are not supposed to discuss. They also said that she should not have listened to the risqué jokes told her by the son of one of her Newport hostesses.

In Hague, Colonel Mann was respected as a courteous and congenial gentleman. He was considered only as a benefactor. Writer Mark Caldwell summed-up Colonel d'Alton Mann in one sentence: "The rudest man of the twentieth century was a master of every social grace."

Hiram Sexton, 1837-1926

By the time of the 1880 Census Theresa was 19, George 17, Smith J. 14, and Flora D. only 2 yrs old. Very little is known about Hiram's son, George who was born in 1865 and lived to age 70.

Theresa and her younger sister never married and lived all their lives on their parents' homestead on Battle Hill Road. Their great legacy to Hague is their collection of photographs of the people and places of Hague on Lake George, NY.

Harry Wilson Watrous 1857–1940

This well-known landscape artist and portrait painter is also the creator of "George" the Lake George Monster. He and his wife, Elizabeth Snowden Nichols came to Hague in the 1890s. Harry served as secretary of the National Academy of Design from 1898 to 1920 and as president in 1933. His paintings are in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Corcoran Gallery of Art, The Brooklyn Museum of Art, and the Portland Museum of Art.

Peter and Judy Foster are current owners of the former Watrous estate, calling it the Ruah Bed and Breakfast. The Ruah is up for sale.

Harry W. Watrous and his wife **Elizabeth Nichols Watrous** had no children, but children in Hague called them "Uncle Harry" and "Aunt Bessie." The couple entertained freely. In 1893 the first entry was made in their guest book. They built many houses and cottages in Hague, all but one of them overlooking Lake George. Mrs. Katherine Mills Price in 1977 wrote descriptions of the eleven Watrous homes and cottages. She believed that most of the cottages were designed by Elizabeth Watrous, saying "They were of her individual stamp. The large semi-circular porches on a number of them are especially notable. Interior decoration was often of Bohemian Art type. Walls were covered with turkey-red or bright orange cheese cloth brought to a rosette in the center of the ceiling." Some of the original other Watrous homes still exist in 2013.

Several Watrous-built homes had the distinctive circular porch of the larger Watrous houses. The present-day Arthur Klein summer cabin is a small Watrous cottage on the water that has enchantingly close views of the Waltonian Islands. It was first christened "Camp Kit" by Mrs. Watrous and was her first "extra" guest cottage... Chipwick is another surviving home with the circular porch. Its dark shingles and circular porch are easy to spot passing by in a boat near Pine Cove.

An incident in June of 1913 made headlines in the Ticonderoga Sentinel of June 19th that year, and in The New York Times on June 17th.

Frank and Joseph Cardinal of Glens Falls, were "tramping through this area from Ticonderoga to Lake George." On the way they broke the law and robbed the Watrous home. The Watrous house, located at the narrow "S" curve on Route 9N on the western shore of the road, overlooks Lake George where the camping islands are close to the mainland. In the middle of the night, according to the story, the two brothers ate lunch on the Watrous cottage piazza and afterwards broke into the house to help themselves to something else to eat and drink. At 2 a.m. Mrs. Watrous woke up hearing a noise downstairs that she thought sounded like someone knocking a chair over. Harry Watrous got his revolver and a flashlight, tip-toed downstairs shining his light, and spotted the intruders. His flashlight went out and when it came back on, Frank Cardinal was caught in the light beam. Frank, the reporter wrote, "...sprang at him, but Mr. Watrous was too quick for him."

Watrous aimed and fired two bullets. Frank collapsed to the floor. His brother Joseph couldn't find the door to get out. He broke a window but couldn't get through it and finally found the door and escaped.

Hague's Sheriff R.J. Bolton was called from the Trout House Hotel which was within walking distance. Dr. Cummins from Ticonderoga was called, too. The wounded man was brought to Moses [Ludington] Hospital where he died during that same afternoon. A sheriff's posse found Joseph in a barn at Sabbath Day Point. He gave himself up and was put in jail at Lake George. Harry Watrous interceded for Joseph Cardinal and the man was released from jail after a month.

Theresa Sexton, 1861-1941 and Flora Sexton, 1877-1953

In summer the Sexton sisters would set up their photography tent along the Hague Brook. In an interview of former Hague Supervisor (1978-1991) Dick Bolton and his wife Penny, Dick remembered Flora and "Tressa" when he was a youth living at the Trout House with his grandfather and family.

Dick Bolton also recalled that Flora had her own darkroom on Battle Hill Rd. Flora may have learned photography from her sister Theresa who was seventeen years older. Only Flora is given credit for the Hague Historical Society's Sexton Photo Collection. Many pictures in books by modern day authors are referenced only as

Hague Historical Society, HHS or simply named as a writer's or organization's collection.

Chances are that in the early 1900s the sisters most likely worked together. From start to finish, producing the final photograph involved a complex process. For one thing, it often meant setting up a darkroom in a tent with all the needed chemicals. Theresa and Flora would have used a camera that took images on glass plates, a few of which survived. The sisters would have used collodion, a sticky liquid chemical that they would have poured and let "flow" evenly onto the glass plate. Their darkroom was set up "on site" in a traveling tent. Inside their darkroom tent, this sticky glass plate would be dipped into a silver nitrate solution to make the plate light sensitive. While still inside the tent, this dripping wet plate would be slid into a frame that fit in the camera. The protective plate in the camera that covered this collodion would be removed, and the camera was ready to take a picture. One sister would stand behind the camera with her head under a black cloth. The lens would be taken off to expose the glass plate to the light and produce the photo image onto the glass. Exposure could be only few seconds or last five to several minutes. Then back to the darkroom tent to develop the glass plate while it was still wet. Finally, the photo could be printed on paper. (For details of the process please see <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/eastman/sfeature/wetplate.html>)

Smith Sexton, 1862-1960

Hiram's son, Smith Sexton, ran a general store in town, which is said to have stood next to the Keenan Bros. Store on Graphite Mountain Rd. Now only Hague Market still operates, locally known as "the store."

Smith Sexton was better known as the owner of two Hague hotels at the beginning of the 20th century. Around 1896 he built and owned Hotel Uncas. The hotel had its own library, two bowling alleys and a post office. It changed hands many times. This hotel continues to operate today as the Northern Lake George Resort owned by the Martucci family.

Hotel Uncas lay snuggled between the lake on the east and the mountains behind it on the west. Uncas Cliff towers over it across today's State Route 9N. Though the original third story of Uncas is gone, the main lodge still has the original foundation and roofline, said Mark Martucci in an interview in 2010.

In recent years each February and March, the Martucci's have hosted ice-diving groups off their beach front—in the same waters where a century ago, the Lake George steamships landed at the Hotel Uncas. In March of 2010, divers explored the pilings that remain under the ice of that long 225-foot dock where a hundred years ago, steamboats arrived and departed with passengers and their trunks as well as with the U.S. mail. Uncas Dock was destroyed by ice years before the Martucci's became the proprietors.

In the years of Hotel Uncas, ice had to be cut away from the dock to keep it from being crushed by the ice. The ice blocks were also used in the hotel's "ice boxes" for refrigeration through the summers. Uncas' second owner, George Marshall, died as a result of that strenuous work in 1906.

The *Ticonderoga Sentinel* reported on March 1, 1906:

George F. Marshall, Proprietor of the Hotel Uncas at Silver Bay and one of the best known and popular Lake George hotel men, lies unconscious at his hotel from paralysis and his recovery is doubtful. He was stricken about 10 o'clock Tuesday afternoon, the shock coming on while he was apparently in his usual good health. He was at work cutting ice around his dock when he told one of his men that he felt peculiar and thought something was going to happen. He dropped his ice tool and started for the hotel but collapsed on the way.... doctors are greatly worried over his condition.

Smith Sexton owned many canoes and rowboats and at least two motor launches that his cousin Wildman Sexton and Wildman's son Jessie E. Sexton built for him. Jessie E. Sexton built the launch named Uncas for his uncle Smith.

Five teams of horses moved Uncas from Jessie Sexton's boatbuilding shop which stood across from the Methodist church on Route 8. Soon after, the Uncas motored south out of Hague Bay past Silver Bay to Hotel Uncas at Sabbath Day Point. Soon guests took tours up and down the length of the lake and enjoyed stops along the way to visit other hotels along the way.

Around 1908 Smith Sexton built his second hotel—the Mohican House. It was a five minutes' walk to the north of Uncas. Today a road would have passed between them. By the 1920's, the guests arriving at the Mohican House sailed from Caldwell (Lake George Village) on the *Horicon* or the *Sagamore* and got off at the long, 250 ft. steamboat dock of Hotel Uncas.

The site of Smith Sexton's second hotel, the Mohican House, was just one-tenth of a mile north of Hotel Uncas. The Mohican House dock was only a two-minute's row away. A 1920's brochure boasted "...our professional orchestra and excellent floor make this a center for the entire locality." Tourists between New York and Montreal could come via Lake George steamer, embarking at either Bolton Landing or Sabbath Day Point.

Pictured in the postcard is the Mohican House with its Annex between them. The back of this postcard describes the hotel as "Modern, homelike, accommodating 100. Rooms single and ensuite with bath. Garage and fine sand Beach for Bathing, Boating, Tennis, Golf near, Dancing, Pool, Ping Pong, Shuffleboard, Horseshoes, Badminton, Croquet, Running Spring Water. Proprietor Howard. S. Sexton. P.O. Silver Bay, NY." (Howard Sexton was one of Smith Sexton's three sons.)

Long time Hague residents **Martin H. Fitzgerald** and **Margaret McCoy Peters** remember the Mohican House as popular in Hague for its music and dancing.

Close to the Mohican House, on its north side, Smith Sexton built a store selling camping and fishing supplies to hotel guests. Local folks could also buy sandwiches and ice cream. (Flag is in front of the store.) On the south side is the parking area—only an empty lot is there today. The larger building across the road is the Mohican Annex, where Wilford Ross played Banjo at the dances. Smith Sexton was Wilford Ross's uncle, and Wilford often played banjo music at one or another of Hague's hotels.

Wilford C. Ross, a newly married man on October 25, 1911, wrote this about the Mohican House and the Annex in his book, *Graphite*, New York. © 1976: This hotel would accommodate about eighty guests. There was also a store and a bar on the grounds. Money was plentiful, and Smith Sexton, the author's uncle, took in about five hundred dollars a day. There was also a store and a bar on the grounds. Uncle Smith owned a large launch, also. [p. 38].

Martin H. Fitzgerald Sr. of Northbrook Cottages, Sabbath Day Point, Hague on Lake George, NY on April 17, 2010 remembers the Mohican House, too. Born in Hague in 1936, Martin H. Fitzgerald is the grandson of the late **Olga Carney**, who played the piano at the celebration of Carl Olmstead's wedding at the Mohican Annex. Martin remembers the Mohican House had a concrete runway in front of it, where his mother told him that she roller skated. Martin would go to the Mohican House store with his father when it was a restaurant and pub where you could get a good sandwich and a beer.

The original Mohican House burned and was razed in 1954. Smith Sexton's Mohican House stood for over a half century—on the west side of Route 9N in Silver Bay, Hague on Lake George.

The property on the right still stands. It was called Ody's and as The Open Hearth Restaurant. It has been vacant since 1986.

William Keith DeLarm

Most of you who were acquainted with Keith DeLarm knew him as the owner and proprietor of DeLarm's Dairy throughout the 1950's and 1960's, the owner/operator of Wintergreen Lake Campsite during the 1970's, or as the Supervisor of the Town of Hague for nearly 20 years. While my frame of reference was somewhat different, knowing him as a father, I did not know much about his early years until this winter when I came upon a treasure trove of his letters, written home from college and Marine Officer Candidate School during World War II. It was enlightening to say the least as they provided a glimpse of those early experiences that shaped the man he became.

He was born William Keith DeLarm, on June 19, 1922, on the family farm in West Hague, son of Ethel Fitzgerald DeLarm and Rollin Keith DeLarm. Some 9 years later a brother, Jim, arrived completing the family. Keith grew up loving farm life, but he was also a natural athlete, as well as a gifted scholar. He played sports throughout school, including baseball and basketball. In 1941, he graduated first in his class from Hague Central School.

Ambitious from a young age, he had set his sights beyond Hague, wanting to pursue higher education in the field of agriculture at Cornell University. He was able to afford to attend Cornell through a variety of grants and scholarships, including a Sears and Roebuck Scholarship and as a participant in the ROTC program.

Never afraid of hard work, he held a number of jobs throughout college, but his experience on the farm landed his first job cleaning out the stables on the Ag campus before attending classes in the morning. To help defray the high cost of living while away at college, his mother would ship a suitcase outfitted with many small pockets filled with fresh eggs from the farm. Jim remembers his mother lovingly selecting the choicest eggs for the trip to Ithaca, which miraculously managed to make it without becoming a soufflé! At one point he was quite literally

"eating high on the hog" with pork chops and sausages also sent from the farm, before he finally began earning his board by acquiring a job in a campus dining hall.

While at Cornell, Keith also played on the varsity baseball team, pitching side arm as the relief pitcher for the "Big Red". In one of his letter's homes, he muses about the "big money" offer that a fellow teammate (and starting pitcher) had received to play professional ball with the Chicago Cubs for \$700 per month. Enticing as the major leagues may have seemed, it was not for him, as he continued to advise his folks from afar on running the farm with his newly acquired education.

By the end of his third year at Cornell in 1944, WWII had escalated and like many other students he left college to serve his country. He attended the US Marine Corps Officer Candidates School in Quantico, Va. He wrote often how extremely rigorous the training was physically, mentally and emotionally, as many candidates fell by the wayside who were not deemed officer material. He felt his patience was tested endlessly, but he endured, graduated as a Second Lieutenant and was sent to Camp Pendleton in southern California. Shortly thereafter, he shipped out to Pearl Harbor and eventually Okinawa where he remained until the Japanese surrendered in August of 1945.

Keith returned to Hague following the war and began plans to run a small dairy operation on the family farm, but first he needed to complete his final year at Cornell. Fate intervened that summer, when a lively, leggy blond who was waitressing at the Island Harbor caught his eye. Nancy Perry was spending the summer with her Aunt Ethel Clifton before starting college in the fall. Their courtship ensued and a year later they introduced Nancy's college roommate, Penny, to Dick Bolton which led to a similar outcome.

Nancy and Keith married in October of 1948, but wedded bliss was interrupted not long after as Keith was called back into service due to the Korean Conflict. Again, he was stationed at Camp Pendleton, this time in charge of the large motor pool. They lived in Oceanside, CA. until his tour of duty ended in 1953.

Upon their return to Hague, they poured their energy into growing the dairy business (by now located on the main street of Hague) and had their first child, a daughter, Susan. She was followed by two more daughters, Sally and then Sheri, before a son was born. The townspeople got quite a kick out of the little blue overalls that Keith proudly displayed from a flagpole over the dairy to announce the arrival of his son, David.

DeLarm's Dairy was a hot bed of activity in those days with people often stopping by; practical jokes abounded. On one occasion, an employee ready to leave work for the day was astonished to find his VW Beetle perched upon milk crates behind the dairy. Each year Keith made his special holiday egg nog which generated a steady stream of townspeople stopping by to sample that season's offering. They often brought along apple jack or other spirits to make it a just a bit more festive!

The Memorial Day parade was another particularly important event in town each year and Keith, a Captain, was the highest-ranking veteran which gave him the honor of leading the parade. He maintained in his characteristic understated way that the real reason was that he was the only one in town who could still fit into his uniform! The highlight of my young life (and later my siblings') was the thrill of being allowed to run out and march along my father's side for those last few hundred feet of the parade.

In 1957, Keith, ready for another challenge, ran for Supervisor of the Town of Hague as a Democrat in a town that was almost 4 to 1 Republican. He won and continued to serve for 19 years and for a portion of that time as the only Democratic supervisor in Warren County. Some of his proudest accomplishments were implementing zoning to ensure orderly development within the town, building sidewalks through the town center, expanding the town park with slips for boaters and working at the county level to create a bike path throughout Warren County (which was dedicated and named for him upon his death in 1979). He was well respected and served as Chairman of many committees at the county level. It was said of him that with his reserved manner, he did not speak often, but when he did everyone listened. At the end of his 19 years as Supervisor, he was honored by the town he served with "Keith DeLarm Day", a day that celebrated his accomplishments and demonstrated the townspeople's appreciation.

The development of Wintergreen Lake Campsite was his final undertaking, as the dairy business waned due to market conditions (large companies forcing out the small independent dairies). He sought to capitalize on the camping craze of the 1960's and bought the farm land from his father. With the assistance of the entire family he turned what had been known locally as "The Marsh" into Wintergreen Lake Campsite. This endeavor also provided him the perfect opportunity to venture into an area that held special fascination for him, alternative energy. He built a 1200-gallon underground tank and created solar panels of his own design to supply hot water for the bathhouses at the campground. He was so encouraged by this success that he developed a closed heating system in our home to alleviate the need for oil.

He ran water to radiators throughout the house heated by the wood burning fireplace. Truly a visionary, he began thinking of ways that he would create wind power. Nancy feared that we would wind up with a windmill on our lawn! Unfortunately, fate again intervened and he became ill with colon cancer, never realizing his dreams for wind power. He passed away in January of 1979.

Many would say that Keith DeLarm was a true Renaissance Man; he would say that he was a "jack of all trades and a master of none". As his daughter, I would say that he was a man of honor, an entrepreneur with a pure heart, with a love for his country, town and family that knew no bounds. He gave much, asked little and his legacy (as in the Emerson quote) is that he left the world a better place having been here.

Clifton F. West, August 26, 1908-July 6, 2001

The son of Burton West and Bessie Clifton West, Clifton fell in love with Marguerite Holman and spent over 50 married years living in their home on Hague's main street, Graphite Mountain Road, across from the Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church. (After a fire, the home was razed in 2010.)

Hague High School was new when Mr. West graduated in 1928. He went on to get a degree from the Mildred Elley Business School in 1930. Then he worked at Island Harbor House, the Bartlett House at Sabbath Day Point and at Phoenix Hotel.

From 1945-1972, Mr. West worked at the Hague Central School in the brick school building which was razed after 1979, when the school became consolidated with the Ticonderoga Central School District. The present-day Hague Community Center was built soon after that.

Mr. West became Hague Town Historian January 2, 1978, earning \$178 a year; he served in that capacity until his death. . He was a founding member of the Hague Historical Society and curator of Hague's historical museum. He left us a rich legacy of written commentary on Hague's people and their history. The Town has honored him by naming the Museum's main room the Clifton F. West Memorial Room.

Dan Belden

Dan Belden began his 40-year career in Town of Hague in 1971 beginning as Superintendent of Highways. Then in 1992 he became Town of Hague Supervisor

after Dick Bolton stepped down from the position. Dan served as Supervisor for nearly 20 years, until his retirement in December of 2011. He took pride in his accomplishments as a public servant. During his first twenty years as Highway Superintendent he worked at upgrading roads and keeping the Town's equipment in good repair and also kept the snowplows going day and night to clear Hague's steep hilly roads.

During his 20 years as the top official in Hague's government, Dan had his work cut out for him from the beginning. Dan Belden's goal in every accomplishment was to serve the people and keep the Town of Hague budget as lean as possible. He fulfilled his goals for improvements making a reality sewer connection, putting in sidewalks, safe water systems, dredging the silt out of streams entering the Town beach, managing the geese and duck over-population that endanger the purity of drinking water, keeping the beach beautiful and safe for swimmers. To that end, Supervisor Dan focused his efforts on obtaining monies through state and federal grants for the Town of Hague and its people. In Dan Belden's own words, "I brought in \$20 million for the town of Hague's citizens."

Dan Belden will be remembered for bringing in a sewer system to the Hamlet of Hague. Replacing old septic systems with a modern sewer system was a great challenge in these Heavenly Hills of Hague with its many steep roadways. Sewers go far in keeping Lake George waters pure. But if the projects he initiated are forgotten, Supervisor Belden will be long remembered for reaching out to the people—for the time he took listening to their needs and concerns and for responding day or night to emergencies.

He was chosen by the whole community as Hague's Senior of the Year on December 6, 2011.

Chamber of Commerce member Sal Santaniello presented him with a plaque: "2011 Hague Senior Citizen of the Year - DANIEL D. BELDEN – In Recognition and Appreciation of your Many Years of Dedicated Service to the Hague Community—from the Hague Chamber of Commerce." The award was given at the Hague Senior Citizens' Annual Christmas Party at HVFD. (Dan was a volunteer with the Fire Department.) Sal noted that "Dan is always there when needed and attends all the local functions."

Warren County Board of Supervisors said farewell to its outgoing members on 12-16-2011. Supervisor Dan received kudos from many colleagues. Horicon Supervisor, Ralph Bently said all would miss Dan's expertise and his knowledge of highways and

public works. From the County Board's Chairman, Dan Stec, came these words: "Dan's a statesman and consensus builder. He has always had the best interests of all Warren County at heart." All wish him well in his retirement.

Dick Bolton, b. 2-2-1927

Dick Bolton (aka Richard E. Bolton) followed in the footsteps of his grandfather, Richard J. ("RJ") in becoming a long-term Supervisor of the Town of Hague. A decade after his retirement, he tells a little about himself, saying that he and his older brother Jack were adopted by their grandfather RJ Bolton. RJ was originally from Brant Lake. Every day he came to Hague with a load of bark that he sold to the local tanneries. RJ liked Hague and decided to stay here and run a hotel. Originally, he owned the Hillside. Then he built the Trout House. Two Trout Houses burned.

Speaking of the "lifestyle" at the Trout House Hotel, Dick recalls that they had bingo and movies once a week, and a piano player, Bert Lovely, in the bar on the weekends. A room rental included three meals a day. The Trout House farm, run by Nathan Elethorpe, supplied the hotel with vegetables, milk and beef to serve their guests.

When asked if his grandmother (Mame) had any special recipes, Dick said she would just go into the kitchen and cook with a pinch of this and a pinch of that. Dick would make a fire for her in the morning in the wood stove. "She made apple pie like you couldn't believe." If the churches were having functions, they would always ask for Mame's pies. They always had pie for dessert.

Until his retirement, Dick Bolton lived in Hague for his whole life, except during his years at Champlain College and his three years in the US Navy. Working hard during his youth under RJ and Mame prepared Dick for a successful life. During his 29 years at International Paper Company (IP) he worked his way up to becoming Yard Superintendent. In meantime, he served as Town of Hague Supervisor for over a decade (1978-1991) while working on committees like NY State Supervisors, the NY State Association of Towns and Warren County legislators.

It's easy to see what made Dick Bolton such a great asset to our town. In 1986, soon after being re-elected, he expressed his appreciation for the cooperation of his staff, stating that it "enables him to do his job more effectively." And this was evident when the Hague Community Center was being built. In December of 1991 when retired from duties as Town of Hague Supervisor, Dick spoke at his last Board

meeting of Hague's volunteers and benefactors. His words are paraphrased on p.4 in *The Hague Chronicle* 12/1991.

The Center was built for less than \$450,000-with 95% of the painting on the inside done by volunteers. Many items were donated by groups or individuals, including landscaping by the Carillon Garden Club, blacktopping by Rifenburg Construction Co., Adirondack lobby furniture in memory of Jack Henry, former councilman, and supervisor's office in memory of Richard J. Bolton, Dick's grandfather, for many years a supervisor of Hague. Martin Fitzgerald and Dick Frasier donated their time as overseers of the project. This center is used extensively by the people of Hague and has become an integral part of our community.

The list of his other accomplishments is long, very long. Supervisor Dick Bolton laid the groundwork for much of what we have in Hague today.

Dulcie Palmer – July 28, 1924 – July 13, 2011

An interview at her home on the Ti Road, Friday, January 5, 2007

Among the many notes we received from people ordering *What's Cooking in Hague? Recipes and Reminiscences* (2007), was the following from Dulcie:

"This recipe book is a treasure. Not only good recipes but so interesting as well. If you ever do this project again, let me know. I may have some interesting pictures to add.

Thank you again. I hope someday we will meet in person."

Dulcie had earlier mentioned that she was a DeLarm. That was all we needed to know to pique our interest! Chris Ianson and I called on Dulcie who spent nearly two hours with us.

Dulcie was born in 1924 to Leola Maud DeLarm Kill and Clyde Emory Kill. Her mother, daughter of William Wilder DeLarm and Hannah Jenkins DeLarm, died when Dulcie was five days old. Dulcie was taken in, cared for and raised by her mother's sister and her husband, Gertrude and Andrew Lewis. They lived in Ticonderoga and that's where Dulcie grew up.

There were three DeLarm daughters of William and Hannah – Leola, Mona and Gertrude.

Leola DeLarm was brought up at the Trout House by the Wheelers.

Rollin DeLarm was Leola's brother and the father of Keith and Jim DeLarm (both of Hague), making Dulcie their cousin.

In 1992 Dulcie came to live with and care for her Aunt Mona Mattison in the home where we visited her today. At one time her Aunt had lived in a red brick house on the left going south toward Hague. She used to bake cookies and pies and made penuche candy all of which was ordered by the boys from the Cook's Bay campsite. They loved the penuche candy! This was back in the 1930's. Her Uncle Earl Mattison used to sell milk, eggs and chickens to the camps. When they would make their deliveries to the campground, they'd be singing away in the truck and along would come the French's dog Peggy, racing them along the road.

As a child, Dulcie had asthma and so in the summers she often went to spend time at her relatives' farms – an uncle in Putnam and Uncle Rollin's in Hague. She didn't have to do any chores, "just played" with Janette and Toddy Fitzgerald (Frank's children). She remembers one day they wanted to go swimming in the Lake (George) and it was a long walk. Aunt Ethel (Rollin's wife) said they had to take young Jimmy so off they went down to Hague Beach. On the way home, they had to run because a big lightning storm had begun. (Sally – one of Keith's four children has the farm now.)

When asked what the farm was like, Dulcie remembered big red barns, cows, chickens and pigs. Uncle Rollin made "awful good sausage" from those pigs.

They used to go up to Graphite for blueberry picking.

Dulcie's Aunt Doris, married to Verner DeLarm, was a school teacher in Westport. Dulcie spent a week with her in the Westport school. It was different from Ticonderoga.

I asked Dulcie if she came to Hague to go dancing. "Oh, yes, we went to the Dock 'n' Dine and the Cave where they had a juke box. The Dock 'n' Dine had bands."

They got to know the boys working at Arcady. Dulcie met one of them at the Woolworth's in Ti where she worked. This was in the 1940's and they used to have big picnics on the beach at Arcady and swim in the Lake. There was a big game room with ping-pong.

Asked if she knew any girls from Hague, Dulcie said she knew Laura Bennett and Helen Beadnell from cheerleading at the basketball games. Her cousin Keith DeLarm used to play basketball and even played at college (Cornell University).

They always went to the basketball games, but on evenings when there was no game her parents let her have parties at their home. They liked to have spaghetti dinners and one night, when they were expecting 6 young people, about 18 arrived! They kept adding more and more pasta to the big copper canning pot, forgetting that the pasta swelled as it cooked. They ended up with so much cooked spaghetti that they put it in containers and offered it around the neighborhood to get rid of it!

Keith DeLarm would come for the spaghetti dinner. His brother Jim was younger. Charlie Fitzgerald came once in a while. He called it "crashing the party."

At this point in our visit with Dulcie, she brought out a folder of wonderful old pictures and mementos that sparked our conversational direction.

When Cecil (Rollin's brother) and Bertha DeLarm opened up the Pine Hill Cottages, it was shortly after they had been married. Their family and friends had a "hornin' in" party – they short-sheeted the beds in the cabin the newlyweds were to stay in, had wedding rice all about, bells ringing and a hammer banging on a big saw blade. A postcard of the Cottages that Dulcie showed us also showed Cecil's house on the hill above the cottages. He also owned the land where Cape Cod Village is today.

There were photos of the Cook's Bay Campsite (later it was sold to the State and became Rogers Rock Campground). The camps there were called "Ticonderoga Camps" for girls and boys. They had big parties there and they made ice cream. They had entertainment at night. The Cook's Bay camps were owned by the French's (Arthur S. French, 262 Springfield Avenue, Hasbrouck Heights, NJ)

She remembers that they had a good chef there – a great big Greek fellow – who made wonderful rolls and crumb cakes. He took a liking to Dulcie and used to give her goodies when she visited. One time she and her Aunt were watching the Greek knead the dough for his baked goods when he sneezed in his hand. He wiped his hand on his apron and went right on kneading! Dulcie didn't like his rolls too much after that. They just took them home and "fed them to the dogs"!

She wasn't allowed to go to the camp on Tuesdays – it was nudist day!

Dulcie remembers going there after the campsite was closed at summer's end and finding lots of goodies – little dolls, birch bark canoes, money – Dulcie was delighted one time when she found \$5!

She recalled the story of a local murder in the brick house on Route 9N. The lady of the house was apparently hung and the rumor was that her body went into the bottomless pond that was behind the house.

Dulcie had postcard photos of Cobb's Cottages (across from the Lakeshore Garage property). These photos were marked Mason Smith.

Dick Frasier

On September 14, 2007, Richard A. Frasier received the highest honor of his profession when he was inducted into the International Towing and Recovery Hall of Fame in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Dick followed in his father's footsteps and kept the Lakeshore Garage business going which he ran with his wife Edna, putting her in charge of customer service and bookkeeping.

Dick and Edna raised their four children in their home above the garage on Route 9N—Jessica, Lindsay, Lucas and Matthew. The garage buildings were originally built as part of Hague's historic Trout House Garage first owned and operated by R.J. Bolton, before Dick's father bought it.

In 2004, Dick and his wife Edna sold their 9N home and garage property to build a much bigger Lakeshore Garage that could house the large tow trucks and wreckers that were becoming a major facet of his business. In early October of 2006, the original buildings of the turn of the century Lakeshore Garage were razed. The lot still stands empty this winter of 2012.

In 1980, Dick became a founding member of ESTRA, the Empire State Towing and Recovery Association. Since 1983, he and his wife Edna have organized The Empire State Towing and Recovery Show which is held each year at Fort William Henry Hotel in Lake George Village. At the end of May or beginning of June the Tow Show features training programs such as safety procedures for clearing accidents and presents demos in Towing and Recovery, like pulling an over-turned mega tanker truck to an upright position. The Tow Show also has its fun events. There's even a

tow truck beauty contest and a final Awards Ceremony. The show draws big crowds for all the events.

During the 1980 Winter Olympics at Lake Placid, Lakeshore Garage became New York State's official towing service. Dick Frasier provided 30 wreckers and was responsible for organizing the towing equipment and manpower from seven states to cover the Olympic region.

In his community, Dick has served on the Hague Town Board for 12 years and currently holds a seat on the Town's Planning Board on which he's also served several terms over the years. He has also been a long-time board member of Ticonderoga Central Schools and on Ticonderoga's Moses Ludington Hospital Board of which he was elected Chairman and Treasurer over the years.

Customers still rely on Dick for emergency repairs and routine car maintenance. The new Lakeshore Garage is now located at 30 Whispering Pines Road—a short drive from the center of Hague, with a right turn onto West Hague Road, just a little way beyond Hague Volunteer Fire Dept.

Jim DeLarm

If you're interested in Hague History, one of the folks it's most fun to visit with is Jim DeLarm. He knows so much of what has transpired in his family and with those around him, and he loves telling all these tales. His conversation is peppered with "I know it for a fact." I expect his father was just as good a story teller and the source for much of Jim's material. Judy Stock and I spent two hours videotaping Jim in September 2009 and here is some of what he shared.

The roots of the DeLarm clan in Hague seem to begin with Richard DeLarm. He was a trained Wesleyan minister who had served briefly in the Civil War and received a medical discharge due to tuberculosis. He found his way to Hague after his discharge and rode the circuit from church to church. When he married Emeline Kelly, they settled down on 200 acres of farmland he bought from the Rising family. Emeline's family farm was in Coldwater Canyon where the Dykstras now live.

Richard and Emeline had a large family. One son, William Wilder, was the first in the family to receive a college degree. He attended Troy Business College. Apparently he wasn't always happy about being away from the farm and wrote home asking to leave Troy, but his father was hell-bent on him getting an education and wrote back

"You stay there until you finish." He did! His 1885 framed graduation certificate now hangs over Bruce DeLarm's mantle!

Having his degree, he was qualified to teach and became the local teacher over towards Tuffertown on New Hague Road. The core of Ralph Denno's home was that schoolhouse. It was a four-mile walk from the farm to the school, so on good weather days father Richard allowed him to take the pony. But in bad weather, to protect the pony, William had to walk the eight-mile round trip. The school had a potbelly stove for which he daily cut a supply of kindling and carried that, along with his lunch bucket. All this for \$1/day and after a while they raised him to \$6/week.

William married Hannah Jenkins in 1889 and took over the farm when his father died in 1887. They had nine children: Cecil, Rollin, John, Leola, Gertrude, Verner, Mona, Kenneth, and Dulcie who didn't survive. It was a bustling household.

Jim recalls the story of young Gertrude coming down sick and her father, being sure it was appendicitis, put out a call to Doc Cummings in Ti to come quick. The doctor arrived on the scene, ordered the children out of the house, and requested a white sheet to cover the kitchen table and a pot of boiling water. "I'm going to operate in ten minutes." And so he did – successfully – because Gertie lived 80 more years! And, as Jim says, the next day they were back to shelling peas on the kitchen table!

The oldest of William's clan was John who ran the store and the post office at Graphite. Brother Kenneth worked in a machine shop in Springfield, VT, and he enticed his brother Rollin to come and work with him, but farming was in Rollin's blood and he returned to Hague where he bought his father's farm in 1920. Kenneth later moved to New Jersey where he ran a successful chicken farm.

Cecil, known as "Zeke", remained in Hague and ran the saw mill on Dodd Hill Road. They also had two rows of cottages, 13 in all, on their property. Some of those cottages remain today as the semi-circle known as Lakeshore Hills at the corner of Dodd Hill and 9N. There was also an ice cream store there across from Judy Stock's red barn. Cecil's sawmill was a good local employer especially during World War II when he was supplying lumber for the government's war efforts. Men who worked there didn't have to serve in the armed services. Jim recalls working there as a youth and finding it to be one of the hardest jobs he ever had.

Leola died after childbirth, leaving her daughter Dulcie (Palmer) in need of care. Dulcie's father was not able to care for her on his own so her Aunt Gertrude and

husband Andrew Lewis took her into their home. Dulcie's father never allowed her to be adopted.

The DeLarm farm was enlarged by 100 acres when Jim's grandfather bought the Swamp Gore property from Gene Doolittle, a local trapper. In time Rollin bought the farm from his father William.

One story Jim loves to tell is how Leroy ("Roy") Balcom came to sell his farm to the Graphite Company running the mill at the time. Seems Roy owned 300 acres on which the company was dumping sand from the refining process around the turn of the century. The company began to worry that Balcom would sue them. Not wanting to tip their hand, they sent a farmer to speak with Leroy about buying his acreage. Leroy said "you come around and I'll give you a tour". The farmer expressed interest and asked, "How much?" Roy said, "Make me an offer;" the farmer responded, "\$5000." Balcom was beside himself with glee and headed lickety-split off to Ti to have a deed drawn. Years later, standing about up at the Graphite store, Leroy recalled at some great length what a "killing" he had made. An official from the company was among his listeners and could hold his tongue no longer; "You could have gotten twice as much -- \$10,000 -- that old farmer was working for us and we now own the land." That must have blown some wind out of Roy's sails! After the sale he moved on to Brandt Lake for a bit where he ran a bakery, but it didn't work out so he returned to Hague, bought a house (presently O'Toole's) and being a talented carpenter, made his living building houses.

Years later Lonergan from the Graphite Company came to see Rollin and offered to sell him 200 acres of the original Balcom land. He said the company had no use for it. Rollin said, "Well, I couldn't pay \$5000 for it.", but Lonergan said if Rollin would take it off their hands that year, he could have it for \$700. The deal was made and brother Cecil later cut \$700 worth of timber off that land! The farm now amounted to 500 acres and presently Jim's house sits on a piece of that Balcom land.

Jim recalled tales of the Brace family who lived not far from the DeLarm farm. The father was a hired hand on the farm and was known to be a bit light fingered. He'd leave for the day with a couple of eggs from the chicken coop. When questioned by Jim's grandmother, he'd say, "I only borrowed them." Tools frequently disappeared as well and so on occasion they'd take a big wagon over to Brace's, have a cup of tea with him, and Grandpa and Brace would load up the tools for return to the farm. Before long the same tools began to disappear again and the recovery routine repeated itself!

Rollin DeLarm had a bad hunting experience when he was about 17 years old. It was 1916 and he was out trapping toward Brandt Lake and the Spring Hill Farm. It was deer hunting season, he had his rifle with him, and there was a deer drive underway when he was hit by two quick shots. One entered in his chest and exited out his back; the second hit his hatchet case. He was able to stem the bleeding some by putting his finger in the entry hole. The hunters arrived on the scene and the young hunter, who had shot him, threw his gun and ammunition away, saying he'd never hunt again. Rollin wanted to walk on home, but the hunters insisted he go with them up to the store at Graphite looking for help. DeLarm kept drinking whatever water he could find on the way – puddle water included – and when they arrived at the store, his brother John said, "What happened to you, Rolly?" Of course, he was bleeding all the way, but they were able to get him a ride home and, in the meantime, someone called the doctor in Ti and told him to come to the DeLarm farm. The doc arrived before Rollin did, and old William said, "Doc, what are you doing here?" "Got a call," answered the doctor. "Well, there's no one hurt here, but come in for a cup of coffee as long as you're here." No one had thought to let Rollin's parents know so they were surprised when he walked in with a bullet hole in him.

The doctor said he didn't know how Rollin was still alive, but he threaded an alcohol-soaked rag through a needle which he pumped back and forth through the wound. Rollin said the treatment was more painful than being shot, but he did survive and was instructed to take bed rest for three months while it healed. Despite Rollin's objections, his father kept him strictly to the bed rest for as long as he could, but after two months Rollin was back to work on the farm though he did cause damage to the wound. Jim believes that opening of the wound was probably a good thing because it allowed any festering to leak out.

Though his horses were generally docile, one-time Rollin was kicked by one and suffered a compound fracture of his arm. It needed to be casted and Rollin told the doctor to "make it extra heavy." "Why?" inquired the doctor. "Just want it that way," was the response. He never told the doctor that it was because he wanted the cast to be strong enough to hold a maple sugaring pail! He could sugar, but couldn't milk so his brother-in-law Henry Watts (Jane Crammond's father) came up to the farm every day in his Model A to do the milking.